

ABOUT THE FRIDA HUIPIL

Our Frida Huipil pattern is inspired by the traditional style of Mexican tunic (huipil) worn by the artist Frida Kahlo.

There are huipiles in Frida's wardrobe in a variety of lengths, fabrics and designs, decorated using machine chain-stitch, hand embroidery or appliquéd ribbons. There are also examples of 19th-century Mexican huipiles in the V&A collection.

Essentially this pattern is a rectangle of folded over fabric with a hole cut out for the head; the joy of this design is that you add your embellishment whilst the fabric is still flat, making it easy to sew.

Treat it like a blank canvas and let your creativity flow!

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

FABRIC: The huipil is a versatile garment that will work in many different fabrics to different effect. Try a light cotton or soft linen for a casual summer look, or opt for a luxurious silk or velvet for evening. According to your size you will need the following amount of fabric (see size guide on the next page):

Small: 130cm
Medium: 140cm
Large: 150cm
X Large: 160cm

HABERDASHERY: Ribbons of your choice! The amount of ribbon you need really depends on your design. 2-3m of each colour is a good starting point.

TOOLS/EQUIPMENT: Scissors, sticky tape, tailor's chalk or washable fabric marker, pins, thread, sewing machine, pinking shears (optional)

PAPER PATTERN: You'll find this on our website as a separate downloadable PDF, ready to print at home. There are x2 neckline options: scoop or square.

HOW TO PRINT YOUR FRIDA HUIPIL PATTERN

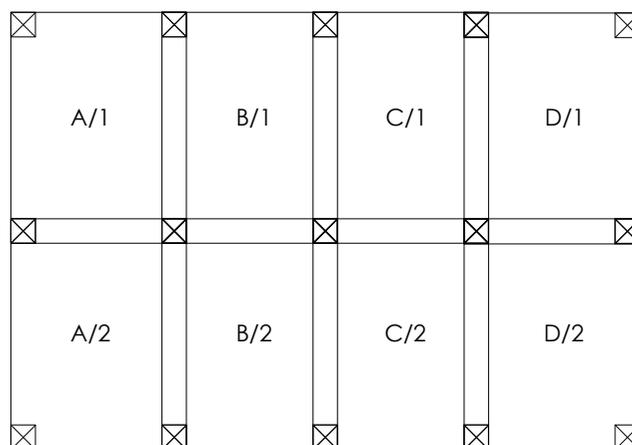
Your Frida Huipil pattern can be printed at home on A4 paper and is designed to be printed in full colour.

It is vital to make sure your pattern prints at full scale or the sizing will not be correct. Your print settings should be set to 'full scale', '100%', 'actual size' or equivalent according to your printer software. There is a 5cm test square on the first page of the pattern. Print just this page first and check your square measures up before printing the rest of the pattern.

HOW TO ASSEMBLE YOUR FRIDA HUIPIL PATTERN

Once you have printed out all of the pages of the pattern, arrange them in columns and rows according to the letters and numbers in the corner of each page. The letters are the columns and the numbers are the rows. It is best to lay out all the pages roughly before you start sticking them together. Once you have them laid out, overlap the matching crosses in the corners of each page and stick the sheets together.

You are now ready to select your size and cut out your pattern – hurrah!



SELECT YOUR SIZE

Use the measurement chart below to choose your size. The sizes are identified on the pattern by different colour lines.

SIZE	COLOUR	TO FIT (UK SIZE)	TO FIT (BUST IN INCHES)	TO FIT (BUST IN CM)
small	pink	8 – 10	32 – 34"	81 – 86cm
medium	turquoise	12 – 14	36 – 38"	91 – 96cm
large	green	16 – 18	40 – 42"	101 – 106cm
x large	purple	20 – 22	44 – 46"	111 – 117cm

Taking your measurements

Measure around the fullest part of the bust, keeping the tape measure nice and straight. No cheating!

Now you've done the number crunching, it's time to get sewing!

Below are some sewing terms that you might find useful as you work through the instructions.

SEWING TERMS

BIAS BINDING: binding cut on the cross-grain of the fabric so it will curve around necklines and armholes to make a neat finish. Buy ready made or make your own.

GRAIN LINE: lines on a pattern that instruct the correct angle to place a pattern piece on the fabric. These are vital to make your garment hang straight.

HEM ALLOWANCE: amount of fabric that you turn up inside the garment to finish its bottom edge.

HUIPIL: tunic style top, originating in Mexico.

NOTCHES: marks around the edge of a pattern used to line up pattern pieces and the position of darts. Think of them like friendly signposts – very important for accurate construction.

PINKING SHEARS: scissors with a zig-zag blade.

PRESS: iron – make sure you choose the right temperature for your fabric or you could cook it!

RIC RAC: a decorative braid with a curvy zig-zag shape, that can bend around curves - perfect for necklines.

RIGHT SIDES TOGETHER: placing the sides of the fabric that **will be seen** (right side) face to face, to ensure you are working on the **inside** of the garment.

SEAM ALLOWANCE: amount of fabric that you leave on the outside of the seam.

TOP STITCHING: a line of stitching that shows on the right side of a garment, can be used for structure or decoration.

WRONG SIDES TOGETHER: placing the sides of the fabric that **won't be seen** (wrong side) face to face, to ensure you are working on the **outside** of the garment.

ABOUT ALICE & CO PATTERNS



Alice & Co Patterns are designed in London by mother and daughter team Alice and Lilia. Alice is a designer, pattern cutter and teacher, with over 20 years experience making fabulous made-to-measure clothes for women under her label Alice&Co. Brought up in a house full of fabric and pins Lilia has been making her own clothes since she could thread a needle, and now works in museum textile conservation.



We believe that dress making should be fun, with fast and simple techniques so you can sew inventive and stylish outfits at home. We are passionate about creating modern patterns that fit well and are enjoyable to wear.

HOW TO MAKE THE FRIDA HUIPIL

Our Frida Huipil pattern is a modern T-shirt length designed to sit on the hips. Once you have mastered the basic technique, play with the length and width to create multiple looks from crop tops to tunic dresses.

All seam allowances are included in the pattern: 1cm around the neck and 2cm at the side seams and hem.

1 PREPARE YOUR PAPER PATTERN Carefully cut out your pattern, following the correct colour line for your chosen size.

2 PREPARE YOUR FABRIC Before cutting out it is important to prepare your fabric by washing or steam ironing to sort out any shrinkage – ignore this step at your peril!

Fold your fabric in half and place the paper pattern on the fabric, with the shoulder line along the fold (see diagram below). The red arrow on the pattern indicates the grain line and should sit parallel with the edge of your fabric – this will ensure your huipil will hang straight once you have cut it out.

Use pins and/or weights to hold the paper pattern in place on the fabric.

3 CUTTING OUT We suggest cutting out your fabric with a pair of pinking shears – this means you won't need to finish the edges. Don't worry if you don't have any: alternatives are given at step 7.

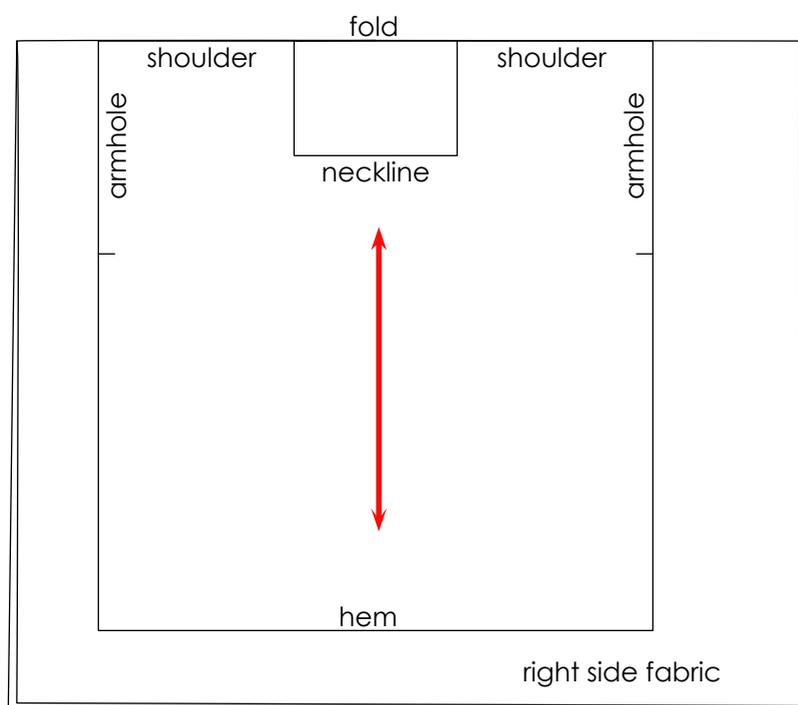
Fold your fabric in half, wrong sides together (ie. so the right side of the fabric is facing you).

Cut around the paper pattern piece through both layers of fabric.

Draw around the neckline onto your fabric – don't be tempted to cut the neckline away at this stage as it is much easier to sew on your ribbons whilst the fabric is still one flat piece.

Mark the notches on the side seams that indicate the armholes.

Be sure to mark the notches and neckline on both sides of the garment.



TIP

'Notches' are small markers in the seams of a garment that indicate how you sew it up.

In this case the fold in the fabric acts as a shoulder seam, so the notches mark where to start stitching from to create an armhole at the top of the side seams.

You can mark your notches with tailor's chalk or a washable fabric pencil, or just make a small snip with your scissors into the seam allowance – be careful not to snip too far though or you will end up with a hole in your seam!

HOW TO MAKE THE FRIDA HUIPIL

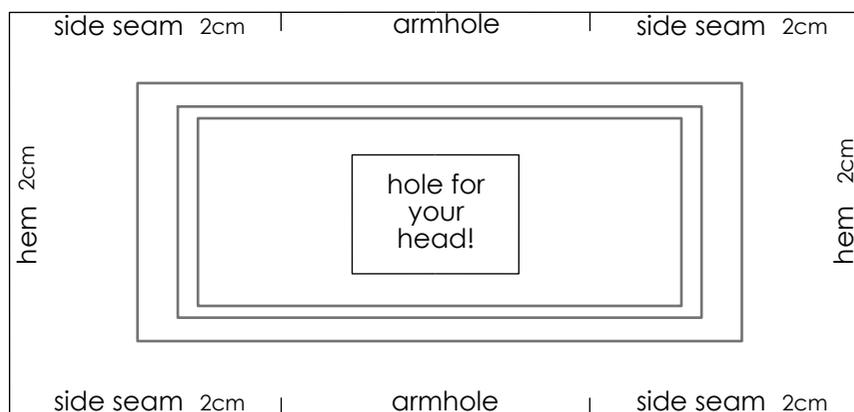
4 PLAN YOUR EMBELLISHMENT You have now cut out your huipil and it is time to get creative!

Our example uses shop bought ribbons, stitched onto the fabric in a square border design. There are infinite varieties of colours, patterns, widths and styles, so play around with different combinations and designs. Or you could even make your own ribbons - it could be a great way to use up fabric remnants!

We recommend stitching your ribbons using a decorative machine stitch - most sewing machines have a few, and at least a zig-zag stitch - just pick contrasting colour threads to your ribbons and play around with the stitch length and width settings.

5 MARK OUT YOUR DESIGN Unfold the fabric and lay it out flat so that the fabric is right side up. Use a ruler and tailor's chalk or washable fabric pencil to mark out your design.

Measure out the length of each ribbon along your design lines - make sure to leave 15-20cm excess, which will get taken up in the sewing.



TIP

Where you place your ribbons is really up to you, but bear in mind the seam and hem allowances.

The lines you draw should mark where you want the centre of your ribbon to sit; this means they will be covered over when you sew on the ribbons.

6 SEW ON YOUR RIBBONS Now it is time to sew on your ribbons! Sew slowly and carefully so you don't distort the fabric beneath.

Choose your stitch according to the width of your ribbon: if it is a narrow ribbon you can just stitch down the centre, for a wider ribbon, stitch along both edges. Remember to experiment with those decorative machine stitches!

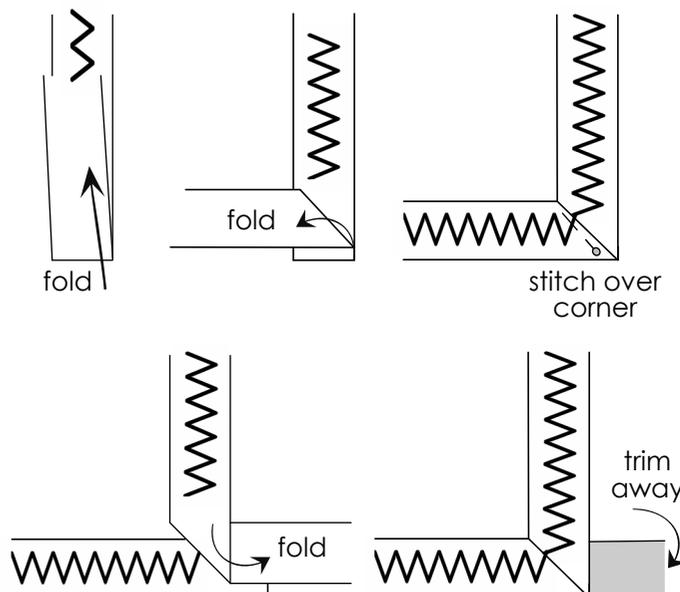
TIP

Start each ribbon at one corner of your design, leaving a couple of cm excess.

When you get to the corner points you can 'mitre' the corners to change direction without having to cut the ribbon:

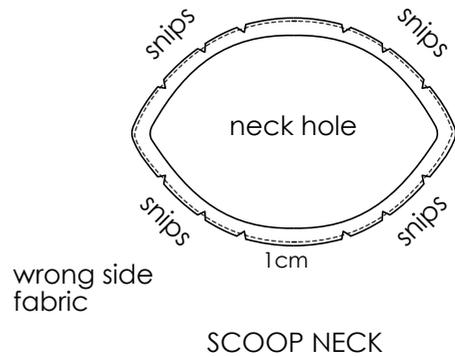
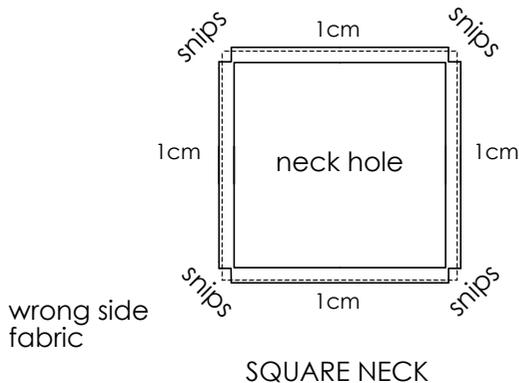
Fold the ribbon back on itself towards the needle, then fold again diagonally in the direction of your design. Hold in place temporarily with a pin and carry on stitching, pivoting the needle at the corner point.

When you get to the end, hide the join by folding the ribbon under diagonally in the **opposite** direction to your design. Stitch down, then trim away the excess ribbon



HOW TO MAKE THE FRIDA HUIPIL

7 MAKING UP: NECKLINE Cut away the neckline and fold and press in the 1cm seam allowance around the neck towards the wrong side of the fabric. You may need to make small snips into the seam allowance in order to flatten the neck line. Stitch in place.



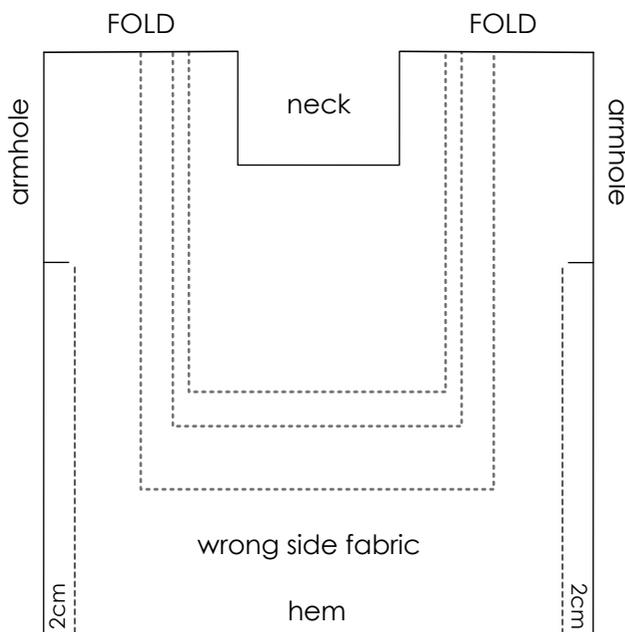
If you are making the square neck option you can finish the neck by top stitching flat ribbon along the neckline, mitring the corners as in Step 5.

If you are making the scoop neck option you will need to use a ribbon that can curve around the neck, eg. ric rac. Alternatively you could enclose the neck edge using bias binding, or finish with decorative machine stitching.

8 MAKING UP: SIDE SEAMS Fold the fabric in half, right sides together.

Stitch along the side seams from the armhole notch to the hem leaving a 2cm seam allowance. Press open.

It's a good idea to try on your huipil at this stage and check you are happy with the length and fit before you finish the armholes and hem.



TIP

If you haven't cut out your fabric with pinking shears you will need to finish the raw edges on the side seams and hem to prevent the fabric from fraying.

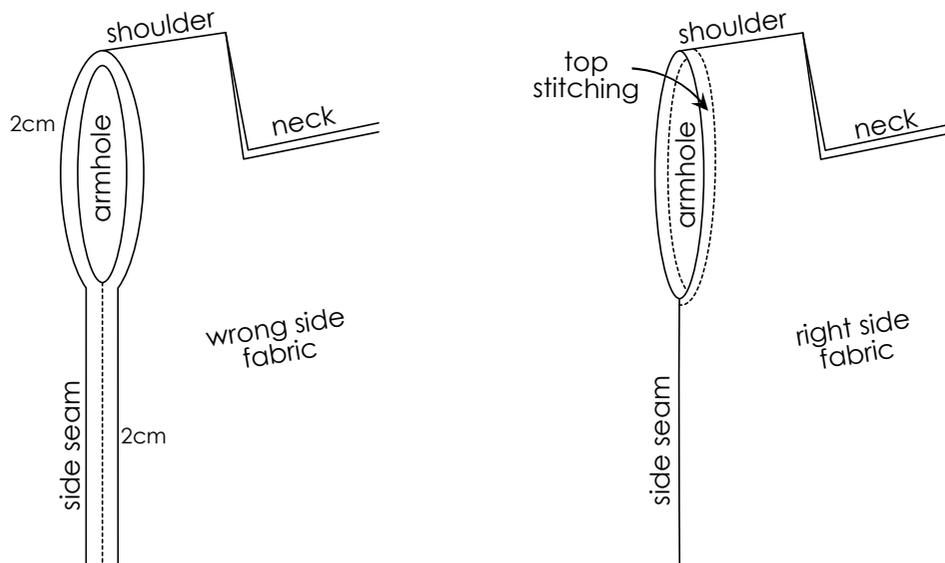
Of course you could use an overlocker/serger if you have one.

Otherwise simply machine a zig-zag stitch along the raw edges of the fabric.

HOW TO MAKE THE FRIDA HUIPIL

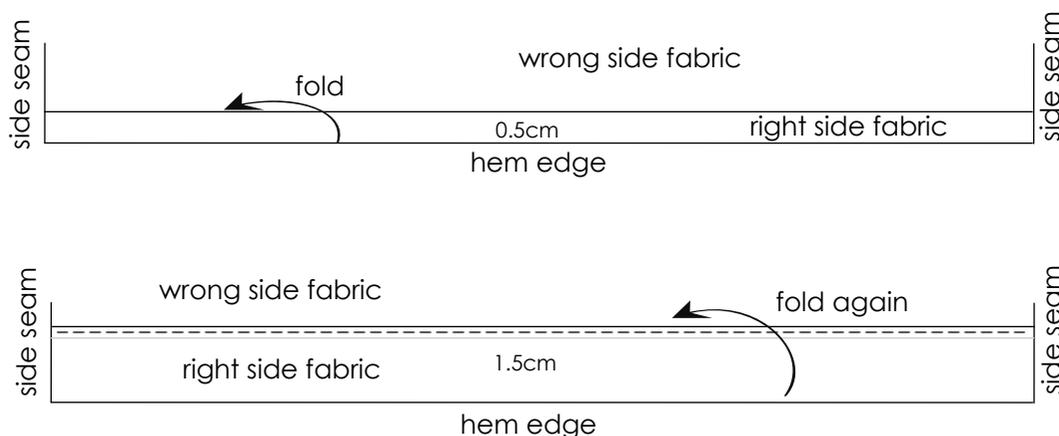
9 MAKING UP: ARMHOLES Still working right sides together, fold back the seam allowance around the armholes by 2cm and press in place.

Turn the the right way round and top stitch around the armholes.



10 MAKING UP: HEM Nearly there! For the final step, turn the huipil back inside out so you are working right sides together again.

To hide the raw edge on the hem the 2cm hem allowance is split into two sections: first fold back the hem edge by 0.5cm all the way around and press to hold in place. Now fold it back again 1.5cm from the hem edge. Stitch down 1.5cm from the edge.



11 TRY ON AND ADMIRE! You have now made your very own Frida inspired huipil! We'd love to see your creations so don't forget to share your pictures with us #InspiredbyFrida @V_and_A

Visit our website to discover more about the V&A's collection of Mexican textiles:
vam.ac.uk/articles/traditional-mexican-dress